

## REMARKS

Claims 1 and 12 are amended. Aside from the language “the one or more virtual devices being representative of one or more of the network devices” in claim 1 and the language “wherein the first virtual device is representative of one of the network devices” in claim 12, the amendments to claims 1 and 12 are for clarification purposes only, are not intended to narrow the scope of the claims, in some cases actually broaden the scope of the claims, and are not being made for statutory purposes.

Claims 13 and 14 have been added. Claims 1-14 are pending.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments above and remarks below is respectfully requested.

Acceptance of the drawings filed on September 17, 2001 is respectfully requested in the next Office communication.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed on August 4, 2003.

### Rejection of Claims 1-12 based on 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,964,841 to Rekhter. (“Rekhter”).

Rekhter purports to relate to a technique for detecting inconsistencies in forwarding databases of a first router and its neighbor router during routing transients in a computer network. (Column 4, lines 20-22). The first router detects when its view of a path to a destination station is inconsistent with the view of the neighboring router. When an inconsistent state is detected, the first router invokes a forwarding mechanism to suppress forwarding loops that arise during routing transients or limit the amount of resources consumed by the loops. (Column 6, lines 52-67). Also, Rekhter states that the first router checks a forwarding information database and when there is a change that affects a hop-count parameter, the first router generates an update message and transmits the message to all of its neighboring routers. (Column 7, lines 32-42). Rekhter does not disclose a virtual device as claimed.

Nothing in Rekhter discloses, either implicitly or explicitly, the claimed limitations of inserting one or more virtual devices within the topology map, the one or more virtual devices being representative of one or more of the network devices, and replacing the conflicting link with a link to the one or more virtual devices based upon the resolution of the conflicting link - as recited in claim 1.

Similarly, nothing in Rekhter discloses, either implicitly or explicitly, the claimed limitations of one or more entries showing a link between a source device in a network and a first virtual device, the source device being identified in a received topology map of a network and the first virtual device not being identified in the received topology map; one or more entries showing a link between a destination device in the network and the first virtual device, the destination device being identified in the received topology map. . . wherein the first virtual device is representative of one of the network devices – as recited in claim 12.

For the foregoing reasons, Rekhter does not anticipate the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 12.

Claims 2-11 depend from independent claim 1. For at least the same reasons discussed in connection with claim 1, Rekhter also does not anticipate claim 2-11. Also, claims 2-11 include additional recitations which, in combination with the recitations of independent claim 1, are also neither disclosed nor suggested by Rekhter. It is respectfully asserted that claims 2-11 are patentable as well.

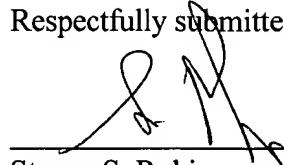
Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of claims 1-14 are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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